



**U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement**

March 7, 2006

News Release

ICE special agents nab 12 criminal aliens in enforcement operation

ALLENTOWN, P.A.—U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents arrested 12 criminal aliens during an enforcement operation here today. Agents and police from a local drug task force developed information that the 12 individuals in Allentown and Bethlehem were non-citizens who were deportable due to their criminal convictions.

All of the criminals apprehended in today's early morning operation will be charged with being removable from the country and will remain in ICE custody pending a hearing in immigration court. The 12 individuals had convictions ranging from sale of narcotics, forgery, insurance fraud, felony theft, and endangering the welfare of a child. Two of the aliens were aggravated felons who have illegally re-entered the country after deportation, a federal felony. They will be presented to the United State's Attorneys Office for criminal prosecution.

The joint law enforcement operation was led by ICE Special agents from the Philadelphia office of Investigation. The five arrest teams were made up of agents, officers from the ICE Detention and Removal Program, members of the Allentown Police Department, and the Lehigh County Drug Task Force.

"Working with local police to target these individuals and get them off the streets means that Allentown and Bethlehem are safer communities today," said Bill Riley, assistant special agent in charge of the Philadelphia office. "These criminals should not be allowed to continue preying on innocent residents. ICE can offer great assistance to local police by removing these deportable aliens from the community."

Riley said close cooperation between ICE and the local agencies is essential because many of the leads on these criminals came from local police officers familiar with their beats. Riley pointed out that ICE has an agent assigned to the county drug task force.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.